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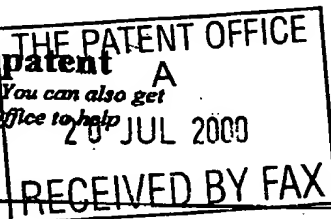
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Patents Form 1/77

Patents Act 1977
(Rule 16)**The
Patent
Office**20JUL00 E554356-1 D01070
P01/7700 0.00-0017738.6**Request for grant of a patent***(See the notes on the back of this form. You can also get an explanatory leaflet from the Patent Office to help you fill in this form)*

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1.	Your reference	P2638.A4/PAG		
2.	Patent application number <i>(The Patent Office will fill in this part)</i>	0017738.6		20 JUL 2000
3.	Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant <i>(underline all surnames)</i>	Hypoguard Limited Dock Lane Melton Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 1PE		
	Patents ADP number <i>(if you know it)</i>			
	If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation	United Kingdom	4135190001	
4.	Title of the invention	TEST MEMBER		
5.	Name of your agent <i>(if you have one)</i>	DUMMETT COPP		
	"Address for service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent <i>(including the postcode)</i>	25 THE SQUARE MARTLESHAM HEATH IPSWICH IP5 3SL		
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6.	If you are declaring priority from one or more earlier patent applications, give the country and the date of filing of the or of each of these earlier applications and <i>(if you know it)</i> the or each application number	Country	Priority application number <i>(if you know it)</i>	Date of filing <i>(day / month / year)</i>
7.	If this application is divided or otherwise derived from an earlier UK application, give the number and the filing date of the earlier application	Number of earlier application	Date of filing <i>(day / month / year)</i>	
8.	Is a statement of inventorship and of right to grant of a patent required in support of this request? <i>(Answer 'Yes' if:</i> a) <i>any applicant named in part 3 is not an inventor, or</i> b) <i>there is an inventor who is not named as an applicant, or</i> c) <i>any named applicant is a corporate body.</i> See note (d))	YES		

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THE PATENT OFFICE A 20 JUL 2000 RECEIVED BY FAX	Description	6
	Claim(s)	3
	Abstract	1
	Drawing(s)	1

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Priority documents

Translation of priority documents

Statement of inventorship and right to grant of a patent (*Patents Form 7/77*) 1Request for preliminary examination and search (*Patents Form 9/77*) 1Request for substantive examination (*Patents Form 10/77*) 1Any other documents
(please specify)

11.

I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.

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DR PETER A GEMMELL
01473 660600**Warning**

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25 JUL 2000

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1. Your reference

P2638.A4/PAG

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3. Full name of the or of each applicant

HYPOGUARD LIMITED

4. Title of the invention

TEST MEMBER

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01473 660600

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Patents ADP number (if you know it): 79 44770001

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DUPLICATE

- 1 -

TEST MEMBER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a test member for measuring the concentration of an analyte in a fluid sample, notably to a test strip for analysing blood
10 glucose or other analytes in bodily fluids. The invention also provides a test device which includes a stack of the test members.

15 2. Background of the Invention

Diabetics regularly need to test samples of their blood to determine the level of blood glucose. The results of such tests may be used to determine levels of medication needed to treat the diabetes at the time. In one known type of
20 system, disposable sensors are used to test the blood. The sensors typically take the form of test strips which are provided with a reagent material that will react with blood glucose to produce an electrical signal. Conductive tracks on the test strip relay the electrical signal to a
25 meter which displays the result. After a sample of blood has been applied to the test strip and the measurement has been taken, the test strip is disposed of. In order to couple the conductive tracks on a test strip with the meter, the test strip needs to be inserted into a sensor
30 holder prior to the start of testing. The sensor holder has corresponding electrodes which are brought into electrical contact with the conductive tracks of the test strip. Alternatively, the reagent in the test strip may undergo a visible colour change, the magnitude of which is
35 used to determine the analyte concentration in the applied

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fluid.

It is known to provide a stack of disposable circular test elements in a cylindrical housing, the stack being urged
5 towards a test station by a spring to form a liquid-proof seal, for example as described in WO 94/10558.

A problem with providing disposable test members in a stack is that the working area to which the fluid sample
10 will be applied can become scuffed, particularly when a compressive force is applied to the stack by a spring.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved test member suitable for use in test devices that
15 employ test members in a stack.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to an aspect of the present invention there is
20 provided a test member suitable for use in a test device for testing of analyte concentration in a fluid to be applied thereto, the test member comprising a base member having a working area to which the fluid is to be applied, containing a reagent which is reactive to the said analyte
25 to produce an electrical signal or a colour change, and a non-working area adjacent to the working area, wherein the total thickness of the test member in at least a portion of the non-working area is at least as great as the total thickness of the test member in the working area.

30

By making the non-working area at least as thick as the working area, scuffing or abrasion of the working area in a stack can be reduced. Moreover, if a compressive load is applied to a stack of the test members, this may be
35 spread out over a greater area, ther by reducing the

- 3 -

possibility of compressive damage to the working area.

In a preferred embodiment, at least a part of the non-working area is of greater total thickness than the
5 thickness of the working area. This further reduces the likelihood of damage to the working area by scuffing or abrasion when in a stack. The difference in thickness is preferably from 1 to 20 μm , notably from 5 to 10 μm .

10 The test member may be of any desired shape for a particular application; however, typically the test member will be an elongate test strip. For convenience hereinafter, the invention will be described with
15 reference to such a test strip. However, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to this embodiment.

In one embodiment, the reagent is reactive to the analyte to produce a visible colour change. Alternatively, the
20 reagent may react with the analyte to produce an electrical signal which is measured and displayed by a meter. In this embodiment, the working area has electrodes which are electrically connected to electrode
25 tracks in the non-working area, and at least part of the tracks are exposed for connection to electrodes of a meter. The invention will be described hereinafter with reference to this embodiment.

To build up the working area, a plurality of layers are
30 sequentially applied to the base layer, for example by screen printing, typically with curing or drying steps between the application steps. The layers which are printed typically comprise electrode patterns, a reagent
35 layer, and a mesh layer (for spreading out an applied fluid). As a result of the application of these layers,

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the working area of a conventional electrochemical test strip is typically about 100 μ m thicker than the non-working area, which contains the electrode tracks and, typically, a dielectric layer. A stack of 100 test strips will therefore be about 10 mm thicker in the working area than in the non-working area. In a test strip in accordance with the present invention, at least a part of the non-working area may be made thicker by any suitable means. Suitable means include, for example: a printed relief ink; an applied pad or tape; embossing of the base layer or an intermediate layer; or an extension of the mesh layer from the working area.

The invention also provides a test device which uses the test members. Accordingly, another aspect of the invention provides a test device for testing of analyte concentration in a fluid to be applied thereto, the device including a plurality of test members arranged in at least one stack, each of said test members carrying reagent means for producing an electrical signal or a colour change in response to the concentration of analyte in an applied fluid; wherein each of the said test members comprises a base member having a working area to which the fluid is to be applied, containing the said reagent means, and a non-working area adjacent to the working area, wherein the total thickness of each test member in at least a portion of the non-working area is at least as great as the total thickness of each test member in the working area.

The test members may be held under a compressive load by spring means.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will now be further described, by way of example, with reference to the following drawing in which:

5

Figure 1 is a top plan view of a test strip in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

10

The exemplified test strip comprises a planar base member 2, in this example of poly(butylene terephthalate) (PBT) (Valox® FR-1 from GE Plastics). The strip is 30 mm x 5.5 mm, and 0.5 mm thick. A working area 4 is of conventional construction, comprising a plurality of electrodes, a reagent layer in intimate contact with the electrodes, and a mesh layer for spreading out a drop of fluid to be received on the working area. Electrode tracks 12, for example of carbon, in the non-working area 8 of the test strip are connected to the electrodes in the working area 4 in known manner. Also in known manner, a dielectric layer 6 is printed around the working area 4 so as to overlie a portion of the electrode tracks 12, leaving just the ends of the tracks exposed for connection to corresponding electrodes on a meter. The layers are applied to the base member as inks, by screen printing. Each ink layer is about 10 to 20 μm thick, and the mesh is about 59 to 67 μm thick. The working area 4 has a total thickness which is about 100 μm thicker than the non-working area 8 up to the dielectric layer 6.

To increase the thickness of parts of the non-working area, a high relief ink 10 has been printed in four strips. The high relief ink has a dried thickness such

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that the total thickness of the non-working area to which the high relief ink 10 has been applied is slightly greater than the total thickness of the test strip in the working area 4. Thus, when a stack of such test strips is formed, and a compressive load is applied to the stack by a spring, the working area 4 will not bear all the compressive load. If the test strips are used in a device which requires one strip to be slid out before being used to test analyte concentration in a fluid, scuffing of the test area will be reduced compared to a conventional test strip in which the working area stands proud of the non-working area.

Although the invention has been illustrated with reference to the use of a high relief ink printed in strips, it will be understood that it is not limited to this embodiment. The ink could be printed as a continuous block, and it could entirely surround the working area if desired. Instead of, or in addition to, the high relief ink, other means could also be provided to increase the thickness of the non-working area, for example: an applied pad or tape; embossing of the base layer or an intermediate layer; or an extension of the mesh layer from the working area into the non-working area.

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CLAIMS

1. A test member suitable for use in a test device for testing of analyte concentration in a fluid to be applied thereto, the test member comprising a base member having a working area to which the fluid is to be applied, containing a reagent which is reactive to the said analyte to produce an electrical signal or a colour change, and a non-working area adjacent to the working area, wherein the total thickness of the test member in at least a portion of the non-working area is at least as great as the total thickness of the test member in the working area.
2. A test member as claimed in claim 1, wherein the total thickness of the test member in at least a part of the non-working area is greater than the total thickness of the test member in the working area.
3. A test member as claimed in claim 2, wherein the total thickness of the test member in at least a part of the non-working area is from 1 to 20 μm greater than the total thickness of the test member in the working area.
4. A test member as claimed in claim 2, wherein the total thickness of the test member in at least a part of the non-working area is from 5 to 10 μm greater than the total thickness of the test member in the working area.
5. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the said at least a part of the non-working area includes a printed ink layer.
6. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the said at least a part of the non-working area includes an adhered tape or pad.

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7. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the said at least a part of the non-working area includes an embossed structure.

5

8. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the said at least a part of the non-working area includes a mesh layer.

10 9. A test member as claimed in claim 8, wherein the said mesh layer is continuous with a mesh layer in the working area.

15 10. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the said reagent produces an electrical signal in response to the concentration of analyte in an applied fluid, the test member having a plurality of electrode tracks for transmitting the electrical signal, the said electrode tracks being exposed on a portion of
20 the non-working area for connection to corresponding electrodes of a meter of a test device.

11. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the test member is an elongate test strip.

25

12. A test member as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, suitable for use in testing for the concentration of glucose in blood.

30 13. A test member suitable for use in a test device for testing of analyte concentration in a fluid to be applied thereto substantially as herein described with reference to the drawing.

35 14. A test device for testing of analyte concentration in

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- a fluid to be applied theret , the device including a plurality of test members arranged in at least one stack, each of said test members carrying reagent means for producing an electrical signal or a colour change in response to the concentration of analyte in an applied fluid; wherein each of the said test members comprises a base member having a working area to which the fluid is to be applied, containing the said reagent means, and a non-working area adjacent to the working area, wherein the total thickness of each test member in at least a portion of the non-working area is at least as great as the total thickness of each test member in the working area.
15. A test device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the at least one stack of test members is held under a compressive load by spring means.

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ABSTRACT

TEST MEMBER

5 A test member suitable for use in a test device for
testing of analyte concentration in a fluid to be applied
thereto comprises a base member (2) having a working area
(4) to which the fluid is to be applied, containing a
reagent which is reactive to the said analyte to produce
10 an electrical signal or a colour change, and a non-working
area (8) adjacent to the working area (4). The total
thickness of the test member in at least a portion of the
non-working area (8) is at least as great as the total
thickness of the test member in the working area (4). The
15 invention also provides a test device which includes a
stack of the test members.

Figure 1

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1/1

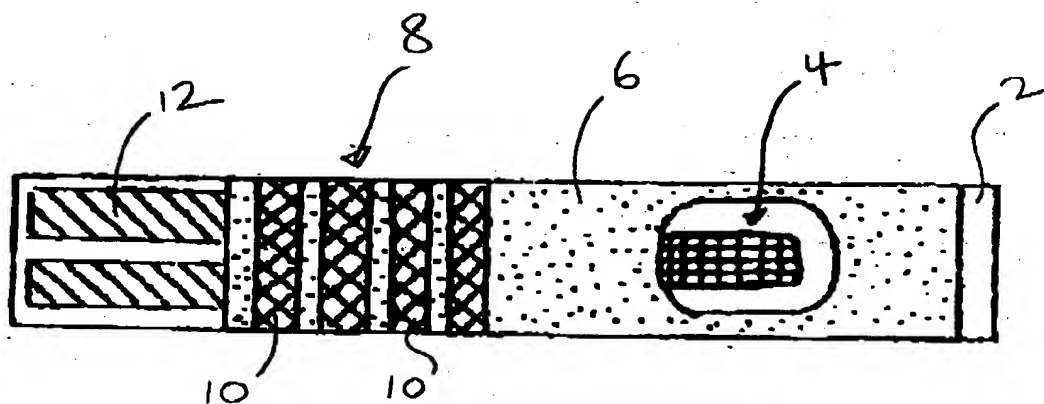


FIG. 1

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